

July 9, 2010

Queens man guilty in '08 contract killing of L.I. attorney

After four days of deliberations, a jury in Riverhead has convicted a 25 year old Queens man of first degree murder, second degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder for the contract killing of a Long Island real estate attorney in 2008.

Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota said he will recommend Darnell Festus be sentenced to life in prison without parole for the murder of James DiMartino, 44, in the parking lot of a Commack restaurant.

Three months ago, DiMartino's business partner, Ronald Thornton, 39, of Nesconset, was convicted of first degree murder and conspiracy charges and is serving a life sentence in the Five Points Maximum Security Correctional Facility in Romulus, New York. Thornton concocted the plot and paid \$8,000 to Festus and another man to commit the murder because he feared DiMartino would link him to fraudulent mortgage deals.

The third defendant, Donovan Raysor, 22, of St. Albans, is charged with first degree murder and conspiracy. He is scheduled to go on trial in September.

State Supreme Court Justice C. Randall Hinrichs will sentence Festus on August 19.



BUILDING 77 • NORTH COUNTY COMPLEX • VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY • HAUPPAUGE NY 11788
TELEPHONE (631) 853-4118

Robert.Clifford@suffolkcountyny.gov

Every defendant is presumed innocent, unless and until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt following a trial at which the defendant has all of the trial rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and federal law.